

MINUTES
Conservation Commission Regular Meeting
7:00 PM Wednesday, October 6, 2021
Room 135, Town Hall, 100 Pocono Road, Brookfield, CT 06804

1. Call to Order

Chair J. Bronn called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Chair J. Bronn, Vice Chair J. Blick, Regular Member C. DePoi, Regular Member M. Carmody, Regular Member T. Cappiello, and Alternate Member A. Schutte-Bell

Also Present: Conservation Director A. Dew

Absent: Alternate Members M. Dew and R. Blessey, and Ex Officio S. Slater
All Members will be voting members tonight.

2. Minutes from the Previous Meeting

- **September 1, 2021**

Chairman J. Bronn noted correction in spelling: Jordie

M. Carmody made a motion to approve the minutes from September 1, 2021, noting correction above. A. Schutte-Bell seconded the motion and Vice Chair J. Blick and C. DePoi abstained. The motion carried 4-0-2.

3. Guest and Public Comment

Lou Memoli, Community Organizer for the Brookfield Pollinator Pathway and Chairman of the Brookfield Advisory Council for the Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy was present.

L. Memoli discussed a project for invasive removal of plants such as wild grape, bittersweet, Japanese barberry, bittersweet and Russian/autumn olive. He explained the difficult process of removing these plants. He suggested a demo project for high school students to help removing these plants, possibly in exchange for community service hours. He said they have already spoken with the science teacher at the high school, and could also reach out to the scouts. WEO A. Dew said HVA comes every year from Danbury as well. L. Memoli also discussed getting the Still River Greenway on the register for the pollinator pathway, and put up signs indicating “pesticide free native plants”. Chairman J. Bronn asked how they would get the Greenway certified for the Pollinator Pathway. L. Memoli said they need something in writing, a policy, from the Town government stating that they will not use pesticides, or pesticides will be judiciously used, on the Greenway and then register the property online.

Tamara Schaeffer, Master Gardener, was present.

T. Schaeffer asked about the Commission's goals and how far-reaching they are. She said if the Commission has the ability to drive change with invasives within the Town, she would like to help. She distributed a CT invasive plant list from the UCONN Agriculture Center, and discussed invasive plants and insects. She also discussed native bees and organic practices.

T. Schaeffer discussed the Lantern fly, which has been spotted in Massachusetts and she said this insect decimates and devastates any crop. She discussed putting this information on the Town messages and updates, website, etc. She also discussed native plants and weeds that are strong to plant and crowd out the invasives.

A. Schutte-Bell volunteered to meet with Tamara to pick a location to begin this project in the spring. WEO A. Dew will get information on the lantern fly up on the Town website.

4. Correspondence

5. Treasurer's Report

Chairman J. Bronn said there was no change to the Treasurer's Report.

6. Old Business

A. Barn Quilt Next Steps - Chairman J. Bronn said he met with Bridget last week and she excited and enthusiastic about helping with this project. He said she has done the redesign, and he shared pictures with the Commission. He discussed design and colors, and the painting process. Chairman J. Bronn said the next steps are for her to send him the supply list, which he will pick up at Rings End. He said Bridget thinks she could get it done in one full weekend.

B. Gurski Driveway Paving - WEO A. Dew said R. Tedesco is still working on it.

C. Nabby Road Maintenance - T. Cappiello said they are discussing the front patio of the residence at 8 Nabby Road, which is in very bad condition, per the pictures he distributed to the Commission. He said they have gotten an estimate from P. McPadden and discussed the details of the estimate.

Vice Chair J. Blick made a motion to approve up to \$4,000 for the Nabby Road Maintenance, to remove and replace the concrete slab, which includes materials and labor. Chairman J. Bronn seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

D. 43 Old Bridge Potential Land Donation - Chairman J. Bronn said there has been a lot of correspondence on this topic. He said they made the request to the Selectmen on August 6th, went to the Planning Commission on September 24th,

and yesterday they received a letter from the Selectmen, which he read aloud for the record. The Commission discussed the request and decided to approve the expenditure.

Chairman J. Bronn made a motion to approve the expenditure of \$10,000 to \$15,000 through the Open Space Fund, to do the title search and the other work that needs to be done to divide the property, with the verification that the property will be donated to the Town. Vice Chair J. Blick seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

- E. September 11 Trails Day Event** - Chairman J. Bronn said the vendors were great but there wasn't a huge public turnout. He said they have discussed in the future doing more advertising. He said overall a nice foundation has been set for next year, possibly in the spring. Chairman J. Bronn recognized A. Schutte-Bell for her work, especially with the vendors. Vice Chair J. Blick asked if in the future they should have more vendors and possibly vendors selling items. Chairman J. Bronn said they didn't want people to think they had to spend while on the Greenway, as a lot of people do not carry money with them as they are walking. Chairman J. Bronn discussed investing in some yard signs to advertise the next one.

7. New Business

- A. Leases for Nature Center and Gurski** - WEO A. Dew said she believes these have both been approved by the Selectmen, but she will check to verify.

- B. Gurski Homestead Status** - WEO A. Dew said she went with P. McPadden to look at the house because the tenants said some tiles had been falling off in the bathroom. She said she is getting an estimate from P. McPadden for that, and a few other little things in the house.

Chairman J. Bronn said it was mentioned to him that they could possibly get money to fix the house and the buildings through the COVID recovery money. He said after looking into it further, he did not pursue it, as he wasn't sure if that was an appropriate use for those funds. He said they do know that the easement has ended on that property from Historical.

The Commission discussed whether the Conservation Commission is in charge of the property, or whether it is not the Commission, but the Town of Brookfield. A. Schutte-Bell said she and C. DePoi spent hours at the Historical Society researching this, and said at some point the Town did give this over to the Conservation Commission. She said they also researched possible historical grants. The Commission discussed researching whether the barn is also on the historical register and possible grant opportunities.

C. Mowing Schedule - WEO A. Dew said she spoke with B. Fisher and told him after October 1st to mow Eriksen. Chairman J. Bronn discussed a complaint he received regarding Happy Landings.

D. Maintenance Concerns: Williams Park, Old Bridge, Lillinonah Woods - Vice Chair J. Blick discussed the kiosk at Lillinonah, noting it is covered in spray paint and swear words. She suggested getting some volunteers to help clean it up and maintain it. A. Schutte-Bell discussed two bridges at Williams Park pond, and she said she spoke with Parks & Rec and they are going to take care of the holes in the bridges. A. Schutte-Bell said the sign at the front of Old Bridge looks like it may have been shot with a BB gun or pellet gun. She said she also spoke to Parks & Rec about this and they said they would take a look at it to determine if that is their responsibility and get back to her. She also noted a fire ring down by the pond.

E. Pollinator Pathway at Still River - Chairman J. Bronn said this topic was covered in the discussion with L. Memoli. He said he will look into the ordinance and see if he can write something up for the Greenway. .

8. Tabled Items

9. Comments

M. Carmody discussed the Brookfield Living Magazine, and said it would be a good avenue for this Commission to get a piece in this magazine. Chairman J. Bronn said he already sent a write up on the trails to this publication and did not receive a response.

M. Carmody asked about a volunteer for the open space at Burr Farm. Chairman J. Bronn said that was Ian Savage. He said he would give M. Carmody's phone number to I. Savage for further contact.

C. DePoi asked about having Peter Robb remove the truck, that has four flat tires and the snow plow, from the property at Eriksen. She said if the gardening people are there, it is really hard to find a parking spot. T. Cappiello said he will follow up with WEO A. Dew and see what she recommends.

A. Schutte-Bell discussed the COVID relief fund, and the possibility of doing composting in Town. She said she spoke with someone from Curbside Compost and explained the program.

10. Adjournment

Chairman J. Bronn made a motion to adjourn at 8:52 p.m. Vice Chair J. Blick seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.